Beyond the bicycles
Chowing down and cleaning up at the Gateway Cup

It's back. The epic, four-day Gateway Cup bicycle race (September 2 through 5, 314-862-1188, gatewaycup.com) returns on Labor Day weekend—but that's really not what we mean by "it." It is a creation called the "Dog-o-Lord," a gourmet hot dog deep-fried within a cannelloni shell and served on a stick during the Giro Della Montagna portion of the Cup. This diet-defying fat bomb is just one of the quirky attractions at the races.

There's also the Thursday-night "carb-up" meal at Pi, an exploratory ride pairing visually impaired children with celeb riders, a buffet dinner at Atomic Cowboy, and of course, the four races. Friday's Tour de Lafayette is a nighttime short course around Lafayette Park. Saturday's St. Louis Hills Criterium, similarly, circles Francis Park. And Monday's Benton Park Classic Criterium passes through Benton Park and Soulard. But it's Sunday's race, the 26th annual Giro Della Montagna on The Hill, that has the most local flavor.

The Italian festivities are spearheaded by Joe Barbaria, who goes by the moniker "King of the Hill." He invented the Dog-o-Lord—and provides another crucial service: picking up locals' cars and putting them on the owners' lawns if they forget to clear the racetrack beforehand. "We don't upset anybody," he says. "I have a certain way to move the car without damaging it, and relocate it real close... Trust me: This is better than getting towed."

—R.K.

GOOOAAAALLL!!!

In his new book, Soccer Made in St. Louis, former Globe-Democrat sports reporter Dave Lange provides a compendium of the sport and the city, arguing that "St. Louis truly was the capital of soccer in this country."

Not convinced? Take a shot at the three-point quiz—then visit stmag.com for more trivia tidbits.

1) When was the first reported game of soccer played in St. Louis?
   May 28, 1875, at the Grand Avenue Baseball Park (later renamed Sportsman's Park). Two teams of lawyers played a charity benefit match.

2) What's the first soccer team believed to have worn numbers on its jerseys?
   Scullin Steel Co. of St. Louis, which appeared in the 1923 National Cup final. (English teams did not use numbers until 1928.)

3) How many St. Louisans have served as captains of the U.S. National Team?